

STORY 6.

THE WORD OF A MUSLIM.

MUTUAL trust is the cement which binds together the various units of a society in a harmonious whole. This trust is engendered by keeping our promises. If promises are not kept society will go to pieces. Hence the stress which Islam lays on this virtue. The following story will show how Muslims kept their word. In the time of (Hazrat) Omar the great a large Persian army under a famous general Jaban advanced into Mesopotamia to measure strength with the Muslim army under (Hazrat) Abu Obeida.

This army suffered a crushing defeat and Jaban was taken prisoner.

Now Jaban's captor was not an Arab general but a simple Arab soldier, who he thought might be easily tricked. So he said to him "You see I am past middle age, and can be of little use to you as a slave. If you set me free I solemnly promise to give you two sturdy slaves who may fetch a large price." The man agreed without much ado.

Jaban had not yet been set free when the Muslims came to know that he was the Persian general. They clamoured that such a formidable foe should not be set at liberty, so that he might not do any more mischief.

The matter was referred to the Muslim general who said, "Brethren one of us has given his word. We as Muslims are bound to honour it as the word of the whole nation." Upon this Jaban was set free.